

world

Over 100 Malaysian schools shut after toxic waste dump

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Over 100 schools in Malaysia have been closed after the dumping of toxic waste into a river caused hundreds of people to fall ill, including many children, authorities said.

A lorry is believed to have dumped the waste in southern Johor state last week, sending hazardous fumes across a wide area and causing those affected to display symptoms of poisoning such as nausea and vomiting.

Over 500 people, many of them school pupils, have received medical treatment after inhaling the fumes, with over 160 admitted to hospital, according to official news agency Bernama.

Education Minister Maszlee Malik initially ordered the closure of 43 schools in the area Wednesday, but later announced that figure had more than doubled.

"The ministry of education has decided to close all 111 schools in the Pasir Gudang area immediately," he said in a statement.

China blocks JeM chief ban

AFP | New Delhi, India

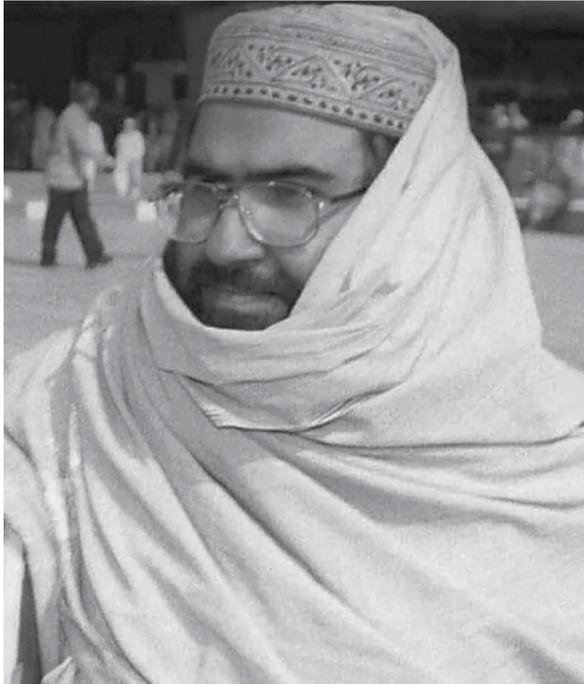
India said yesterday it was "disappointed" by China again delaying a bid to blacklist the leader of a Pakistan-based militant group that claimed a massive suicide bombing in Kashmir last month.

The blast on February 14 killed 40 Indian troops and triggered tit-for-tat air strikes and an aerial dogfight in the most serious bust-up in years between New Delhi and Islamabad.

Although the suicide bomber was native to the part of Kashmir that Indian controls, the attack was claimed by Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), one of several militant groups based in Pakistan.

China on Wednesday put on hold a request by Britain, France and the United States to add the leader of JeM, Masood Azhar, on a UN sanctions blacklist which would subject him to a global travel ban, an assets freeze and an arms embargo.

China -- an all-weather ally of Pakistan which has blocked three similar moves -- said it needed more time to examine the sanctions request targeting Azhar, and asked for a technical hold which could last up to nine



Masood Azhar (Courtesy of Economic Times)

months.

In a statement, the Indian foreign ministry said it "was disappointed by the outcome", adding it would continue to pursue all avenues to make sure "terrorist leaders who are involved in heinous attacks on our citizens are brought to justice".

China has blocked three previous attempts at the committee on sanctions against Al-Qaeda and IS-linked groups to blacklist the JeM leader. The group itself was added to the UN terror list in 2001.

China's decision was the top news across Indian media

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We are disappointed by this outcome. This has prevented action by the international community to designate the leader of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), a proscribed and active terrorist organization which has claimed responsibility for the terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir on 14 February 2019

INDIAN MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Ten arrested in India for playing PUBG mobile game



Ahmedabad, India

Indian police have arrested ten university students for playing PUBG, the hugely popular smartphone game described by one minister as a "demon in every house".

The arrests occurred in western Gujarat, where local authorities enforced an outright ban on PUBG last week over concerns about its impact on the "behaviour, conduct and language" of those playing it. The students were released on bail later the same day.

Another police official, Rohit Raval, told the Indian Express newspaper the game was "highly addictive and the accused were so engrossed in playing" they did not even see police approaching. Gujarat is the only Indian state to ban the game -- which has been downloaded more than 100m times around the world.

Ethiopian Airlines 'has flown' black boxes of crashed Boeing to Paris

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Ethiopian Airlines said yesterday that the black box flight recorders from the Boeing 737 MAX 8 that crashed with 157 people on board have been flown to Paris for analysis.

"An Ethiopian delegation led by Accident Investigation Bureau (AIB) has flown the Flight Data Recorder (FDR) and Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) to Paris, France for investigation," the airline wrote on Twitter.

Urgency is mounting to determine the causes of Sunday's



A researcher of the Office of Investigation and Analysis (Bureau d'Enquete et d'Analyses - BEA) retrieves the data of a flight recorder in Le Bourget, Paris.

crash as Boeing finds its entire fleet of the model grounded.

Ethiopia said it does not have the equipment to process the data and Germany said it would not analyse the boxes as it was unable to read the software used by Boeing. US Federal Aviation Administration acting chief Daniel Elwell said the black box flight data recorders had been damaged. In Kenya, which lost 32 citizens in the crash, a minute of silence was observed at the One Planet Summit on climate change.

Third K-pop star embroiled in South Korea sex video scandal

Seoul, South Korea

A K-pop star has quit after admitting he watched illicit sex videos received from another artist, his agency said yesterday, the third singer to be engulfed in a scandal sweeping South Korea's music industry.

Yong Jun-hyung, 29, who is a member of boy band Highlight -- formerly known as Beast -- said he watched a video of singer Jung Joon-young having sex with women taken without their consent.

Jung, 30, was questioned by police on Thursday after admitting he shared the footage with other men, including mega K-pop star Seungri, who is also embroiled in a sex-for-investment criminal investigation.

Both Seungri -- a member of boy band BIGBANG -- and Jung, announced their retirement from show business earlier this week.

Yong "has watched the footage... and had an inappropriate conversation with (Jung)," the singer's agency Around Us Entertainment said in a statement, adding Yong will leave the band Highlight on Thursday.

South Korea has been battling a growing epidemic of so-called "molka", or spycam videos -- mostly of women, secretly filmed by men.

As well as secretly filming women in schools, toilets and offices, "revenge porn" -- videos men take of themselves



Yong Jun-hyung

having sex with their exes or partners filmed without the women's consent -- is believed to be equally widespread.

According to Han Sol, an activist at Flaming Feminist Action, such videos have long been watched and shared by South Korean men as a form of entertainment and a way to strengthen their "brotherly ties".

Yong, who has also worked as a record producer and actor, previously denied allegations that he had been involved in the ongoing K-pop sex scandal.

Mumbai bridge collapse kills four

Mumbai, India

Four people were killed and dozens injured when a footbridge collapsed near Mumbai's main train station yesterday, the latest accident to highlight creaking infrastructure in India's financial capital.

The bridge, which was under repair according to multiple Indian media reports, gave way around 7.30 pm (1400 GMT) as rush hour commuters made their way into Chhatrapati Shivaji terminus.

"Twenty-eight people were injured when the bridge collapsed. Four of those taken to hospitals have succumbed to

their injuries," Tanaji Kamble, a spokesman for the local civic authority's disaster management cell, said.

India's National Disaster Response Force said it had sent a team to the site over fears that people may be trapped under rubble.

The accident comes almost two years after 23 people died in a crush on a narrow overcrowded footbridge at Prabhadevi station in the centre of the city in September 2017.

Some 7.5 million passengers commute in nearly 2,500 trains daily on Mumbai's colonial-era rail network, a lifeline for the city's 20 million residents.



Onlookers, office-goers gathering around injured people after a footbridge collapsed outside the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus railway complex in Mumbai.